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"What fools these Mortals be!"
MIDSUMMER-NIGHTS DREAM.

Puck

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DECORATION DAY.

THE annual Decoration Day farce will soon be in progress. It is the custom on this day for the friends and admirers of the departed veterans to assemble, and, after divers expensive preliminaries, to deck their graves with wreaths and garlands. They are abetted by the usual horde of advertisers who disport themselves on the graves of the veterans with announcements of "Prize Soap," "Stove Polish," and "Moth Exterminator." This may be admirable business, but as patriotism it is open to several trifling objections. In the first place this annual farce is more expensive to the advertisers than the ordinary method of securing publicity; it yields a scantier return. In the second place, the proceeding is of no benefit whatever to the soldiers for whom presumably the solemnity (or festivity) is designed. It will probably be as well for all parties when the true nature of the business comes to be understood; and PUCK cannot help suggesting in this connection that if one-half of the money which is spent on flowers (which are oftentimes stolen from the graves,) was devoted to the widows and orphans of the deceased veterans, a benefit would be accomplished which would render Decoration Day an anniversary worthy of remembrance.

SHADOWS.

THE United States Senate, by a strict party vote, last week placed ex-President Grant on the retired army list, with rank and pay of commander. The action itself is not important. General Grant was a brave and successful soldier, and a movement tending to perpetuate the bright memory of that phase of his career cannot but be grateful to Americans, since it is an association which they have reason to cherish. The act in however, in its real meaning possesses other significance, to wit—a virtual entering of the General in the Presidential race of 1880. The occasion was graced by numerous speeches of Republican Senators, who stated substantially their belief that Grant was the "coming" candidate. It does not need a very prophetic or sagacious man to state that the next Presidential election will find the Republican party in very sore straits for an available candidate. Grant, who brings with him the prestige of past success—and, what is better, a complete isolation from the Electoral muddle—starts with advantages over all his rivals. His European tour has been of incalculable political benefit to him here. A soldier's name always inspires feelings to which the popular pulse is responsive, and that transcendent political virtue, never to have been beaten, is Grant's still. Those Republicans who run with the "machine" associate him with the brightest era of Republican ascendancy, and such enemies as he has are without the pale of the working forces of the organization. It seems highly probable, therefore, that, should the present drift continue, General Grant will be put in nomination in 1880. If the reign of

peculation and prodigality, violated trusts, sectional animosities, and general debauchery of the public service, which marked his term, is to be revived, it is about time that it became fully known. It is a question which cannot be too widely or too soon discussed.

MOSQUITOS.

FROM time immemorial the mosquito has been subjected to the severest criticism on all sides, and every conceivable obloquy has been heaped upon it unsparingly. We don't consider this just. The mosquito may in some respects be a winged crocodile trimmed with unearthly music, but that is not its fault; it was born so, and it is quite as natural to it to buzz as it is to a book-agent.

The mosquito-bite is not such a terrible affair, after all. It is not a circumstance to the bite of a dog, yet when one makes its appearance there is a general rush to bang it into eternity. This is not the case when a canine appears in view. He not infrequently is the recipient of an opulent shower of missiles from peripatetic gamins, however.

A man who will cheerfully mind his own business on ordinary occasions will go out of his way to kill a mosquito, and, should it be a long distance from him, he will shout: "Hey, Jones, there's a mosquito," in a tone both musical and sincere.

If a man sees another fixing a pin for some one to sit on, or, in fact, preparing to perpetrate a joke which may result fatally to the jokee, he will never so much as say a single word by way of warning; but let a mosquito come within gunshot of a person whom he knows not, and he will go frantic in an endeavor to rescue.

Experienced people are of the opinion that the sting of a hornet contains much more body and piquancy than that of a mosquito, yet the hornet is not slandered and hounded by every one in christendom. He wanders wherever his fancy dictates, and it is a pretty well established fact that he gets all the elbow-room he wants.

It is true that the mosquito comes around at the dead of night in such a manner as to cause one to consider it a flying hand-organ, but then it is not so annoying as cats, dogs, horse-cars, and other nuisances which we have to contend with and listen to every blessed day of our lives. We might go on further with a defense of the mosquito. We might tell you a great deal more about him, but the time is near when everyone can write his or her private essay from experience, and we want to leave some facts untouched for their benefit.

HATED, feared, and maligned,
Was Medusa, the old-time Gorgon,
But it should ever be kept in mind
She didn't play a hand-organ.

WHEN the sun gems the bosom of morn,
And dewdrops the tulip adorn,
Our dreams fly away,
With the speed of a jay,
At the sound of the lacteal horn.

ON the meads butterflies now appear,
And the swallows skim over the weir,
Gay laughterful June
Will be with us soon,
And the cocktail's supplanted by beer.

'MONG the bushes the fisherman lies,
To woo Sir Brook Trout with false flies;
After wooing all day
He meanders away,
Using language which Christians despise.

Puckerings.

ROME was not built by contract.

THEY cry "War, War!" and there is no War.

THE legislator who eagerly seeks power makes a mistake when he pursues it by way of Albany.

A PENNY saved is two-thirds of a cent given to savings-bank officials by the new scaling process.

YOU can no longer flaunt your Astrakan cap in the face of an humbled and outraged constituency. Its time has expired by limitation.

HE was a shrewd young man, and he remarked: "If you knew what I know about that book, you would see that there was nothing in it."

THE Reverend Frank I. Smith is received into the full communion of the Plymouth fold, and sitteth on the right hand of Beecher. He has qualified.

A CONTEMPORARY inquires: "Does the Lord require overwork?" He does not. But if the fine-featured rector can contrive to be at his post one day out of a possible seven, the sacrifice will be recorded where it will do most good.

WE have no objection to economy, even when practiced by corporations. If the Elevated Railroad Company wishes to reduce its force of employees, it has an indisputable right to do so. But when it takes to reducing them with girders, we think that a respectful protest is in order.

WHEN a shopkeeper frightens a respectable woman into hysterics by accusing her of theft, in order to calm her agitation he sends her into a back room and deposes a female assistant to go through her pockets, to search for parasols, umbrellas or seal-skin saccques. The operation is technically called "soothing" and "consoling" her.

THE forerunners of "summer guests"—the newspaper correspondents—have begun to arrive at the watering-places, and the downcast proprietor brushes the cobwebs from his thermometer and exclaims: "It lies if it says summer has not begun." But he wisely refrains from removing his great-coat.

THERE appears to be a remarkable similarity between the members of the Potter family. Grace-Church Potter's little attempt to advertise himself as an Anglo-Saxon has fallen flat, and gone to join his brother's "Resolution." If the Potters are fair samples of the Anglo-Saxon race, Anglo-Saxons must be quoted at about 25 cents a dozen, as they run.

WHEN Spring grim Winter, its mother-in-law, buries,
And Love its passionate similes words,
When the garden is rife with lilacs and strawberries,
And the woodland's delicious with songful birds,When the bees are busy at fair Hymettus,
And the hornet makes felt his fiery foil,
Then bring forth the sumptuous dish of lettuce
With plenty of golden olive-oil.

EXPOSITION EPISTLES.

"I go, I go; look, how I go!"

PUCK: *MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM*, ACT III, SC. 2.

DANA will forget the "fraud first triumphant;" the *Tribune* will subside on its Union Pacific; the little *World* will rest in the shade of its obelisk; the funny *Times* will draw its face down to the length of a winter evening; and the quintuple *Herald* will say nothing of itself (we hope,)—when the Parisian specials first deluge Printing House Square with their letters on the French Exposition.

New York has not forgotten the glory of its Press (Edmunds says it is worth fifty cents a line, editorially.) No matter what is doing at Albany or what is not doing at Washington, so long as it may bask in the light of a Paris letter, telling everything of the Great Fair—except its stupidity. No well-regulated newspaper ever sends off a special correspondent without a batch of "instructions" as long as Wood's Tariff Bill. Puck's man got his last week. They are said by all who have read them to be not only sensible and emphatic, but unusually explicit as to what will be done and what will not be done. It costs nothing to read them.

CORRESPONDENT will take a land route to Paris, as he does not wish to get in that hopeless condition of the man who in his first hour at sea feared he would die, and in the second feared he would not.

Besides, the French line of steamers serve wine with the rations, and he never indulges in intoxicating drinks—no newspaper men do; it being a sort of free lunch, he could not patronize it—newspaper men never do that, either.

He will not fight a duel with M. Paul de Cassagnac.

Nor visit the *Jardin Mabille* or the *Chateau des Fleurs*.

He will not have a word to say of the "Man in the Iron Mask."

He will call upon Sara Bernhardt and watch her sculp. (No correspondent has yet said anything about this, and we don't want you to give it away.)

He will interview MacMahon on the "President's Policy" and get Hugo's opinion—of a National legislative body whose own estimate of its importance is ninety per cent.

If a revolution breaks out, he will take a pleasure trip across the Channel—newspaper men are naturally timid.

He will have a fashionable carriage to drive through the Champs Elysées—newspaper men always ride in carriages.

He will see all that is possible of the people. (The women are expected to appear in evening dress.)

He will not drink *vin ordinaire*—newspaper men never indulge in the ordinary.

As he expects to start for the Continent the last of this month, it will be utterly impossible for him to dispose of more special cable dispatches to the *Herald*, after that time.

He will pay particular attention to the Art Department of the Exposition, and with true American fervor probe each canvas with his cane. None but the really æsthetic do it successfully.

It is yet undecided whether he will devote his letters to sketches of luxurious vice or virtuous luxury.

He will tell the truth, as all the correspondents do who write from Paris.

In this particular they must excel, for he is under solemn obligation for the utter truthfulness of his contributions. He mourns, with his Calvinistic friend Mark Twain, that the truth is so rare a gem in the journalistic coronet, and like him, too, is a person from whom facts flow as naturally as the precious Otter of Roses from the Otter. The above is Mark's expression of it.

BEHIND THE SCENES IN CONGRESS.

A Western Member Explains why he Voted for the "Potter Resolutions."

HE was in bed, wrapped in a blanket, which was so bunched about his shoulders that a pair of No. 11 boots protruded through the lower edges of his covering. I also noticed that he wore his trousers. I naturally inquired why this was thus.

"Well," he said, "if a man feels shaky and 'sees things' at night, it takes him a long time to get into his boots and pants for to go downstairs for a cocktail to steady him. But if he's them togs on, he can throw himself into a coat, and get into the bar in no time."

So spoke the Honorable Jeremiah Jerusalem Starke, M. C. from the 49th district of Indiana.

I had called upon him at his own request. He told me he never kept a "spread" in his room, except on special occasions like the present. He drank at the bar, where it was "give and take" all around. If he kept whiskey and cigars in his room, he wouldn't be able to keep the "fellers" out, and he didn't feel sure that like reciprocal attentions would be offered him.

He wanted to explain why he voted for the "Potter Resolutions."

"What did I go into Congress for?" he asked angrily. "I had a good practice out in Acropolis Cross-roads, whar I live. I've got a partner, fatched up in the Harvard Law School, chockfull of legal points. An' I s'pose I'm about the roughest cross-examiner in the West. Our folks out there are always fighting; so they always go for our firm—my pard. to take care of the law, an' me to pitch Hell-fire an' brimstone into the other side. And my! don't I do it. I rake over the lives of their fathers and mothers, and their aunt's sisters. I prove that their grandfathers were pirates, an' their grandmothers hanged for child-stealing. Once a defendant came to me and offered to settle the case, with my fees, if I'd let up. He said he was afraid I was going to ruin the character of his unborn babe. Yes, we were making money enough, so why did I go into Congress? I'll tell you. I'm attorney for the Land-Snatching Department of the Myhtown and Fizzle-ville Railroad. You never heard of it? Well—it ain't built yet. What we want is Land-Grants to raise money on. Then we can raise money on the road, can't we?—and then we can bust, can't we? Better men an' better roads than we have bust, afore now; and the men stand A1 in the community to-day! That's why I'm in Congress—to get that Government land-grant through. There's millions in it!"

"But what has that got to do with Hayes?" I asked.

"Everything," he replied, spilling his bourbon over the blanket. "Of course, Hayes was elected as much as any man was; more than Lincoln was. And I've said so. Then some of these New York and Pennsylvania fellers—leaders, you know—come to me and say: 'Are you going back on your party?' 'Haven't I got to vote accordin' to my conscience?' I ask. Then they smile and ask if I expect them to support my land-grab bill? That makes me cave. I jest give right in, and promise to vote to get in Tilden or Beelzebub himself, if I'm told."

"I'm afraid," I remarked, "that the business interests of the country will suffer from this reopening—"

"Oh, cuss the business interests of the country! What have they to do with us Congressmen? We are most of us lawyers, an' we grow fat off 'n the business difficulties of the country."

What's a politician a politician for? Why, to make all he can out of it for himself, ain't he? I've got a job afore Congress. D'ye think I'm the only member that has? We've all of us got 'em, hard! Some of us hold up our heads high and go in for a 'higher tone of statesmanship'—the probity of the Fathers of the Republic—and all that. These are the fellers to be afraid of. They've got a long hand, groping deep down into the treasury, somewhere, on the quiet. Fellers like me, that only want a land-grab, or a \$100,000 a year steamship subsidy, don't amount to shucks in a country as big and rich as this is."

"And is that the way in which votes were whipped in for this Hayes investigation?"

"Sure's you're born! When we fellers come together at the opening of the session, we ask each other: 'What have you got?' 'What are you going to put through?' It's a mail-route; it's the appointment of old Moneybags to the mission to Kamschatka; it's perhaps only Government aid to the mother-in-law of private Popple, who was kicked by a mule and can only digest spoon-victuals. It's, however, some job, from the highest to the lowest; and we bargain, like a Jew cheapening a second hand coat, as to the support we shall give each other. Every man has got some job that he must put through for himself—and more or less jobs that he must put through for his constituents, if he expects to get back into Congress again. And so it's a trade and barter, a bargain and sale of votes, from the beginning to the end of the session."

"How about the constituents?" I asked. "Haven't the Democracy written to their Representatives, demanding an inquiry into the validity of the Presidential title?"

"All bosh, young man! Members of Congress receive few letters excepting those asking for seeds from the Agricultural Bureau, pub. docs., and from parties having jobs intrusted to the member. They've got something else to do besides writing letters about politics. The editors howl in their papers; but then, Lord bless you! they must do something to keep up their circulation."

"What do you think will be the result of this investigation?"

"What was ever the result of any Congressional inquiry?" my member retorted. "There'll be a majority and minority report; both sides will call each other liars; we Democrats will say the Democracy are martyrs; all the Republicans will swear the Republican party is the party of saints; and—and then we'll go home in palace-cars, counting our spoils."

"What will be the effect of all this turmoil on the President himself?"

"Well, I reckon he'll eat his three square meals, suck his orange, go junketing about the country, conciliate the South, and—but what's all that compared to the land-grant for the Myhtown and Fizzle-ville Railroad! That's the question now before a great and free people. With that "grant" granted by Congress we have the guarantee of a large influx of skilled artisans—emigrants from Lapland—who would build up that country into a home of the industrial arts. By-the-bye, what would it cost to get up, in Puck, a picture with green cactuses, an' glaciers an' castles covered with red roses, with a sort of blue lake with green fishes into it—with the railroad put in strong, and the Goddess of Liberty, in colors, on an eagle, hovering over a lot of mills and foundries and factories, all smoking—just to show what could be done if the "grant" is granted?"

I told him the cost would probably be immense; but he said he thought the investment would pay. So, having squeezed the lemon of information with the fountain-pen of stenography, I said *au revoir* and departed.

TRIPLET.

HER PAIN.



H, brown-eyed little maid,
What doth your mind invade,
That you sigh
In that wistful sort of way?
Are you disappointed, pray,
As you hum that ancient lay,
Nelly Blye?

On your pink cheeks tears repose,
Like dew drops on a rose
In the mead.

I watch warm blushes chase
O'er your lovely, dimpled face,
Kissed by real Mechlin lace,
Guaranteed.

Hath love your bosom thrilled?
Is your mind with pleasure filled,
Now you sigh?
Have you some one (sorry fate,
Who has made your heart elate,
But who won't reciprocate)
In your eye?

Have your dreams of rapture fled?
Is your pet canary dead
And at ease?
Has your *modiste* spoiled your dress?
Unto me you may confess
That which now I cannot guess,
If you please.

Perhaps 'twere best the woes
Which on your mind repose
Be unsaid.
One opinion still I hold;
And I'm very badly sold
If you haven't got a cold
In your head.

Well, fair one, never mind,
After all, I feel inclined
To confess
That, although you sadly sigh
With a teardrop in your eye,
It is really none of my
Business.

R. K. MUNKITTRICK.

WOMAN'S KINGDOM.

THE following letter, which was written by a lady, will throw some new light on the much-mooted question of woman's kingdom, and of what it actually consists:

To the Editor:

Being a much-interested reader of your paper in general, and the Home department in particular, I would like to add my mite, first, in regard to the question of ironing. I do not believe it is our duty as mothers to bring up our daughters to the habitual practice of slighting the ironing. If we allow ourselves to be slack in one part of our work, it is a very easy matter to slight other parts, and before we are aware of it such habits are formed that our homes would soon look very uninteresting to our families and our friends. Rather teach our daughters and our help to do the ironing and other work with neatness. There are times when a housewife is alone with many cares, and not feeling very strong, that she should be pardoned if she should not iron both sides of her pillow-cases and underwear, so that she may gain a little time for rest and fancy work, if she chooses. And to those mothers who have time for ornamental work, for beautifying your houses, I would say, do not overlook the boys' room. Some think if the boys have a bed to sleep in, and a chair or two in the room, nothing more is necessary. By all means, if possible, make their rooms look cheery with carpet, books, pictures, and ornaments which need not be very costly, but which will give such a bright homey look to their rooms that they will thank you with sparkling eyes, and you will feel well paid for your work. We need to do something to make our boys

and girls love home, and feel that we want their company.

To the inquiry, "What shall I do with all the worn-out woolen socks which accumulate?" I will answer that I use some of mine in this way: Take a piece of one, and tie it firmly to the end of a stick, and use it for blackening the grate; use another one for polishing (I blacken my stove coal). I use others for rubbing the tea-kettle, which will keep it bright a long time without scouring.

Do the readers of the "Home" know that turnips pared and chopped, not too fine, boiled tender, and seasoned with salt, pepper, a little butter, and vinegar, make a nice dish for variety? And fritters made as our grandmothers used to make them are excellent, sweetened to suit the taste and used for fried cakes.

This growing question is evidently one of early and primary importance in woman's kingdom, and no prudent and sagacious householder would seek to underrate it. We cannot help thinking, however, that the lady devotes a trifle too much attention to it. There is no historical precedent for ironing. Throughout the long course of years which are encompassed within the annals of Mythology and Chivalry there is no record of women—or men either, for that matter—ironing. The only use to which this domestic utensil has been put is of modern occurrence, when fond wives have expressed their dissent by hurling irons at their spouses' heads. We confess that we have never seen this ironing question so strongly put as it is by this lady. She finds it a panacea for all domestic ills, and alludes to it as what is needed "to make our boys and girls love home, and feel that we want their company."

—To do the ironing?

She does not pause here, but proceeds to the inquiry—not at all germane to the ironing question—"What shall I do with all the worn-out woolen socks which accumulate?" She does not say that ironing wore them out. She only hints at it. How indeed shall we use them? She tells us:

1st. Take a piece of one and tie it firmly to the end of a stick and use it for blackening the grate.

2d. Use another for polishing.

3d. Use a third for polishing the tea-kettle.

The reader is just about commencing to get interested in the recital, when the lady branches off into another question: "Do the readers know that turnips, pared and chopped (not too fine), boiled tender, and seasoned with salt, pepper, a little butter and vinegar, make a nice dish for variety?" They ought to. "And fritters made as our grandmothers used to make them are excellent." Yes, though the individual memory of most men does not extend to the time when their grandmothers were engaged in this fritter business.

We have reproduced the lady's letter to show wherein woman's kingdom really and truly consists. It might, perhaps, be remarked that if it is limited to ironing, the sweetening of fritters, and the utilization of worn-out socks, it may as well remain woman's, as man can have no desire to share in its pursuits.

THE MAN WHO WRITES HIS OWN NAME.

WHEN we consider the financial wrecks engendered by men signing other people's names to checks and drafts, we will not judge with undue harshness or severity the man who signs—however frequently—his own. But this should not render us blind to the existence of the foible or careless as to its consequence. There is a class of men—happily it is limited—whose solace and delight in life is to write their own names. That they should do so when the proceeding represents to them something of pecuniary gain, is but natural. But that they should take a wild and greeful pleasure in flourishing their signatures at other times is, to say the least, peculiar.

These men are a positive boon and benefit to stationers, and are not without attractions to the gold pen manufacturer; but to the rest of humanity they are a blank.

You have met such men. You recognize their chirography. You will not question their existence.

This kind of man writes a letter solely that he may be able to sign his name at the end. His happiness is enhanced if the letter is short, for then the signature is not wasted on a long epistle. The sum of his pleasure is complete if he can write a note like this:

Dear Jack.

I will see you before you get this letter. Till then, adieu.

JOHN BONAVENTURA CASTILIANO MEECH.

Sometimes he signs recommendations. Sometimes he flourishes his name to a petition. Sometimes he writes an "order" in this wise. (It is usually addressed to a stranger with whom he has no business transactions):

I hereby authorize you to pay bearer \$4,000 or other sum you may desire.

JOHN BONAVENTURA CASTILIANO MEECH.

The height of his happiness is attained if he can sign drafts on fictitious banks or defunct commercial houses, or on individual myths. In calls for benefits he comes out boldly. His name may not be at the head of the list, but at all events it comprises the great body of it. The foible of this man, when abnormally developed by long and unrestricted practice, leads him into strange flights. He signs away property which does not belong to him, he graciously transfers rights and privileges which he never possessed, he affixes his signature to contracts he has neither the desire nor the power to perform. In other ways, too, he makes the judicious grieve and the righteous howl. His name is everywhere. And one can gauge his happiness by the number of times you see it. The reckless prodigality with which that man showers "passes" to places where he is unknown, is luxurious in its newness and unbounded fervor.

There are two places from which his familiar name is significantly absent. The first is from subscription lists. The second from bills, under the word "received payment." He was never known to so far forget himself as to affix his name here unless for ample cause. Ah! you will say, he is mercenary. Not at all. He is consistent. A name you find where it is not needed is not likely to be met with where its presence is essential. A man who writes his name so much cannot be expected ever to write it to any purpose. You cannot quarrel with this man—he is not generally a woman—you can only laugh at him. Sometimes, however, he meets a sad fate, as in the case of one who, after following this pastime for twenty years, fell to dying in a poor-house. His ruling passion was strong not only in death, but in *post-mortem* futurity. For the only thing he left was the following

WILL.

I hereby give, devise and bequeath all my property, real and personal, wherever situated and of whatever description, to

BONAVENTURA CASTILIANO MEECH to be held by him and his assigns forever.

I have this day affixed by mark. †

N. B. I have concluded to write it

JOHN BONAVENTURA CASTILIANO MEECH.

Witness:

JOHN BONAVENTURA CASTILIANO MEECH.

And we cannot help thinking that when he reached his eternal house, he grabbed the pen from the hand of the Recording Angel, and registering his own name, sidled into the realm where lead-pencils melt and gold-pens lose their cohesion.

ERNEST HARVIER.

A WORD TO SCIENTISTS.

I AM a professional gentleman. Not, as the term generally implies, a third violinist in an orchestra, nor one who guides the destinies of a district school; but a professional *boarder*.

I graduated and took my diploma many years ago, and have ever since had an extensive practice, or I should say, have ever since been extensively practiced upon by—I shudder to think how many generations of landladies; my tribulations thus far ending with: "I think, ma'am, you said your name was—?"

"Yes, sir, Jones—Mrs. Thomas Jones; ke'p the grocery store."

"Oh! yes." I remember now this worthy person has a peculiar habit of alluding to a grocery whenever she mentions her name. What can it mean? Why should she take such particular delight in presenting to my imagination visions of flour, and soap and starch, and gentlemen in white aprons dealing out brown paper parcels? Can it be possible that that is part of her name, that the woman has actually entered into the holy state of matrimony with a grocery store, in order to supply her boarders? But no, that seems too absurd, so I will have to give up all conjecture. I will candidly acknowledge, after an experience which only a naturally strong constitution has enabled me to survive, that I always have "given up all conjecture," and have never in a single instance succeeded in fathoming the dark and sinuous ways of the landlady.

My object, however, is not to give my own personal reminiscences—which would require a score of volumes at least—but to suggest to the world a new theme for discussion, to offer to the antiquarian and the scientist a new field of labor; in short, to introduce a subject which, though it must be of absorbing interest to the public, has never received a tithe of the attention it merits.

I refer to the LANDLADY OF THE PAST.

It is an astounding fact that, while archaeologists have been wasting their time in making discoveries that no person but themselves cares a farthing about, this most interesting study has been utterly neglected. Of what interest is it to the millions that "Peruvian mummies have been found with false teeth," or that Prof. Schoolmaam has discovered that the inhabitants of ancient Troy used hair-oil and colored pocket-handkerchiefs? What interest do the millions take in such trivial matters as these?

On the other hand, what applause would greet such announcements as: "Distinct traces of landladies have been discovered in Eastern Syria." "From excavations recently made by Dr. Hornmug, it is believed that the landlady was known to the Chinese at a period long prior to the Christian era." "Prof. Smith has presented to the Smithsonian Institute a piece of fossilized fried sole-leather, found by him in a geological formation, more than two million years old, which proves beyond doubt that the landlady is pre-Adamite."

Let the man who would win undying fame, and the approbation of mankind, go forth and search the musty records of the past; let him present to the world a carefully prepared statement of the rates of board for all ages; let him inform us as to the usual bill of fare under the Pharaohs; as to whether fire and gas were considered "extra" in the palmy days of Rome; and give the laws relating to delinquents' baggage during the dark ages. Let him, in fact, give every detail, that we may compare our condition with that of our earliest ancestors.

He who seeks the bubble reputation even in the paths of literature, let him write: "The Landlady and her Effect upon Human Progress;" "The Landlady of the Picts and Scots," or, if disposed to be sensational and a

little more modern, "The Landlady's Scalp: a Tale of the Boarder; full of Hair-breadth Escapes and Marvelous Adventure." Even the debating societies may earn distinction by discussing and proving to our satisfaction: "Who is the first landlady mentioned in the Bible?"

Having studied this great question only as an amateur, I can merely offer the above as a suggestion, which, if acted upon, would, I firmly believe, change the entire course of scientific research. I believe it would be proved that the widows of the Roman generals took boarders; that the strongest test of the endurance of the Spartan youth, was his ability to live three months in a first-class boarding-house of the day; and that the final dissolution of the Eastern Empire was in consequence of the high prices of board prevailing.

For my part I am no great believer in what is called the progress of the age. I have more respect for the ashes of the ancient tyrant than for the hashes of the modern landlady. I would rather be tortured at the stake in the sixteenth century than tortured by the steak in the nineteenth; and when I think what trials (in the way of boarding-houses) life has still in store for me, I positively envy the men who were dragged captive through the streets of Rome and given over to wild beasts.

X. Y. Z.

HIS BROTHER.

ONE day last summer when I had nothing on hand to occupy my mind, I took a trip down to Rockaway in lieu of something better. One reason why I went to this place was because I am fond of salt air, and another was that I possessed a dead-head season-ticket, on account of having, in a spirited leader, called each of the boats of the line a steam paradise.

I sat on the lower deck at the bow, and in respectable proximity to the dispenser of stimulants, and was taking in the beauty of the surroundings and enjoying myself hugely, when a man sitting near by accosted me. He was a tall, slim, lantern-jawed Yankee in appearance, and had withal a deliciously droll look about him which was not at all displeasing.

There was something so novel in the manner in which he requested me to favor him with a light, that I soon got into conversation, and shortly after we became so well acquainted that he threw aside all reserve, and prevaricated with a grace and ease that would have lifted an Egyptian mummy off its foundation.

As the man came around to collect the fares and tickets, we remarked how successful he was in missing no one, and this turned the conversation on the general shrewdness and sagacity of man.

I soon ascertained that I had struck the keynote of my companion's weakness, and after a while he said:

"Some men are soft and others are sharp. Now I had a brother who was of the latter class. Sharp? I'll just bet he was. There wasn't anyone around the country that could take him into camp. At one time he used to shoot game for the market, and it got to be hard work to make much in this way, as the prices were low and the ammunition dear. The competition was great, too. My brother thought that if he could manage to hunt without using powder and shot he would soon eclipse all competitors. He didn't see at first how he could do this; but one day when he was loafing around the garden, he noticed a toad inhaling flies at a range of about two feet, and it struck him that he could get up something in the shape of a fowling-piece on the same principle. After a while he made a sort of syringe-gun, with a barrel whose bore was about equal to that of a stove-pipe.

"Of course it did not amount to much at long range, but at short! whew! Why, I've seen my brother get within five or six feet of a Shanghai rooster and draw a bead on him; then he would suddenly give a pull, and before the rooster knew where he was, he'd be sucked into the barrel and captured. He used to haul apples off trees in this manner. He used to go down to the pond back of the house at night, and build a fire near the land, and conceal himself from view in the bushes. As soon as the fish would make their appearance near the surface, he would pull the trigger and inhale them.

"He used to go around with this suction-gun at night and inhale cats, and in the daytime he would occasionally capture dogs by the same method, and dispose of them at the pound. After this he gave up capturing birds for the market. It was too tame for him; he wanted to go for bigger game, so he decided to go to Texas and catch wild cattle."

I asked him if his brother succeeded.

"Succeed? well, yes, I imagine he did," he continued. "He went and made a big suction-gun, and rigged it on a carriage like a cannon. Soon he was on the plains, doing such a thundering good business, and shipping so much to the different cities, that they had to put on extra trains. You see, he would just run his cannon down towards a herd, and, after waving scarlet flannel to draw them near, he would get a bead on one of them, and in another instant there'd be a sort of bullet-whizz, and that beef would go floating into the gun, head over heels, right side up with care. He used to secure mustangs, buffaloes and Indians in the same manner."

"He did?" I asked credulously.

"Of course he did; and once he got a big stake from the government for catching a murderer. You see, the culprit was a refugee from justice, and in a country between which and this there existed no extradition treaty. The fellow was living in a ranch very near the line running between the United States and Mexico. The murderer could never be inveigled across the line; so my brother planted his cannon among some shrubbery, and had a number of officers of the law concealed near by. As soon as the murderer came out in the morning and got within range, he was very adroitly sucked in and handed over to the authorities."

"On another occasion, my brother had an idea that fish could be made amphibious, if taken when very young, and he determined to try to work out this idea for the benefit of science and his own amusement. He got some young flying-fish, and had them in troughs lying around the yard, and after his method, whatever it was, turned out to be successful, and by the time those flying-fish were a year old, they used to fly up in the trees and go to sleep, and sing like blue jays. He found out, too, that the flying-fish has much horse-sense and intelligence, and he trained a lot to take the place of carrier-pigeons; for, in crossing the ocean, when tired of flying they could go into the water and take a rest. After a while the old flying-fish fell in love with one of the Dominick hens, who reciprocated the tender passion; and shortly after the student of Audubon was greatly surprised when he beheld flying-fishes covered with feathers and chickens clad in silvery scales marching and flying around the barn-yard. I believe firmly that that man could have got up a peacock with horns, if he had a fair show. Yes, I believe, under favorable circumstances, he could have got up a cross between a kangaroo and a sewing-machine."

Then he excused himself for a few minutes to go up-stairs to see if his wife was all right. When he returned I had changed my locality.

R. K. M.

WILLIAM RAY,

THE MAN WHO ALWAYS JUST MISSED IT.

I.

INTO the office came, the other day,
An individual known as William Ray:
Thin, pale and seedy, long of legs and hair,
He was a "character."

Disdaining chair,
"Well, howdy!" said he, backing to the fire;
"It's rather colder than I should desire."
"How are you, Bill? Sit down and warm
your toes."

"No, no; don't care to set."
"Well, Bill, how goes
The world with you?"

"Well, well, not as it might.
'Twixt me and you, I've had a grievous sight
Of care; all things have got contrayry; Fate—
The Goddess Fate, you know—has here of late
Been all agin me . . . So I'm goin' West—
Into the Goldin West. Surprised? It's best:
Feathers and fur and things is gittin' sca'ce;
Besides, I'm wearied of the Human Race.
And—and—" he paused reflectively, then said:
"And—er—perhaps you know Miss Tildy
Head?"

Of course! Well, now, 'twixt us, *there's* why
it's best

That I should go into the Goldin West!"
Again he ceased, and gazed with far-fixed eyes,
As when some poet-dreamer reads the skies.
"Ah, yes! ah, yes! 'twixt us, *there's* why it's
best

That I should go into the Goldin West.

"You see—this yere's a secrit, now, you
mind—

I nicknamed her the 'Princess of the Rhind'—
Not that she come from that far Eastern land;
It was poetrical—you understand.

Well, sir, this Princess of the Rhind, you see
(Miss Tildy, ricollect), has seemed to me,
For years and years, the fairest of the fair,
The dearest of the dear, with raving hair,
And raving black, black eyes, and Grec—well,
well,

You've seen her.

"How I loved her, who can tell?
O Love! O Love! none but a poit knows
(I'm one, you know) thy sweetness and thy
woes—
Partic'ly woes!

"Well, sir, my Princess she
Was set apart, I know, by Heaven for me—
I've alwus knowed it sence I was a boy!
That thought has been my never-failin' joy—
My never-failin' joy!

Ah, such is life!

"Well, 'bout the time I thought I'd take a
wife,

And ask HER to be mine, I was taken sick—
Nigh onto death—and Dick, that scoundrel
Dick

McGriggors—dandy pup!—he put in there,
And I'll bet any man (in love all's fair, you
know)—I'll bet—he—out—and said
—and LIED—

That I'd the 'lirium tremens!!

"Oh, if I'd
A—died when I was young!

"I never take
A drop—unless it's for the stomick's sake,
Or maybe in a toast, or maybe treat;
(All poits *must* drink treats) and I repeat
That he, O coward! told—

"Well, sir, you've heard
That he and she's to marry on the third,
And—I—well, *now* you know, sir, why it's best
That I should go into the Goldin West.

APPROVED BY GEO. FRANCIS TRAIN!

WE BREATHE AGAIN!

Citizen Editor
Puck
(The paper that discounts
Punch even in its best days
under head Lemon Thackeray
Tom Taylor & Horace Mayhew)
New York City

The above flattering tribute to the merits of PUCK was received last week from the Coming Dictator. We reproduce it for the benefit of our readers, and in order to testify our full appreciation of the compliment paid us. For fear it may not be legible to many of our readers, who might take it for a landscape or a map, we translate it. It runs thus:

CITIZEN-EDITOR PUCK.

PERSONAL. (The paper that discounts *Punch* even in* its best days, under Leech, Lemon, Thackeray, Tom Taylor, and Horace Mayhew.)

NEW YORK CITY.

* The "in" is an inspiration of our own. ED. PUCK.

* * * "I've bought a steed—
A charger-steed, of iron nerve and speed!
We'll skim an' scour the wide peraries there!
And beard and skelp the red man in his lair!
We'll sing our songs of Fire and Flash and
Flame!

And great shall be the Ranger-Poit's name!
And then shall she, the Princess of the Rhind,
Conclude she hadn't oughter changed her
mind;

For when she—but we needn't mind the rest.
A month, and I am in the Goldin West!
The far, far Goldin West!"

II.

A week or two
Had passed, when, as I strolled the suburbs
through,
I met a figure on what might, indeed,
Have been, once on a time, a "charger-steed."
The figure was none else than William Ray.
He stopped a moment in the street:

"Good-day,"
He sadly said: "I'm on my farewell ride!
Yon is the cot where doth my Fair reside;
I'm going by: she's standing in the door—
She'll look upon me last as ne'er before.
The Ranger'll jus' sweep by her little nest
As he will sweep out in the Goldin West!"

With trunk thrown back at forty-five degrees,
Rigid and straight, his chin on breast, his knees
On high—likewise the whip his arm behind—
He dashed toward the Princess of the Rhind.
Straight on towards the house he grimly rides,
Digging his heels into his charger's sides.
Now for the sweep!

Alas! the charger sweeps—
But William Ray? Apparently he sleeps
There in the dusty street.

Up to his side
I rush—as does Miss Head. A crimson tide—
A clotted pool—closed lids—a hand of lead:
Her eyes meet mine—we simply whisper,
"Dead!"

Into the house they bore his body. There,
After a while, the breath returned, and
"Where?"

He faintly asked. I briefly told him all.
A cloud hung o'er his face. Then from the
hall

She came. His eyes met hers. A radiant light
Shines on his brow. He clasps in his her hand,

And lowly, slowly speaks:

"O blest command
Of Fate—to die by Thee! I leave to thee
My steed and gun and things—my property.
Princess, farewell! I die—in bliss! 'Tis best!"
I'm—goin'—gone—into—the—Gol—din—
West."

III.

A fortnight later, on the public square,
Whittling a chicken-coop with sombre air,
I saw this William Ray. He greeted me
With melancholy smile. "Not dead," sighed he;
"Fate wouldn't 'low me such poetic death!
I'll never have the chance agin!" His breath
He drew, and then: "Well, NOW I *know* it's
best

That I—" he pointed to the "Goldin West."

QUIPPLE YARROW.

LITERARY NOTES.

— Mr. Sothern's book is called "Birds of a Feather," but if the critics continue as they have begun, he will be left without one for his nest.

— Anthony Trollope's new story, "Is He Popenjoy?" is published in the Franklin Square Library. A special railroad edition for Long Island will be issued under the title, "Is He Poppenhusen?"

— A "Dictionary of English Literature" has just been made by Mr. W. Davenport, but it contains not the names of Eliperkins, Samcox, or Geofetrain. This shows the bigoted prejudice of the bloated Britisher.

— The Chicago *Tribune* copied in full a long article on verse and verse-making from one of the June magazines, without giving credit either to the writer or to the magazine. Seems as though this was a pretty low-down kind of literary larceny, even for a silver paper.

— Mr. George H. Jessop, one of the best-known journalists on the Pacific coast, is now in this city, whither he has come with the intention of settling down permanently, and connecting himself with the eastern press. Mr. Jessop is a clever and facile writer of exceptional versatility and much experience. He will be a most welcome addition to metropolitan journalism.

GILMORE'S

GILMORE'S GARDEN opened for the season on Saturday night. It is unnecessary to say that it opened in a blaze of glory. Gilmore's has a blaze of glory, on an average, about once a week.

There was a large crowd—a fair proportion of first-nighters; all Aimée's audience from the Park; a very small collection of exceptionally bad actors, many hundreds of the general public, and George Francis Train.

Levy was there, too. He came to listen to Shuebruk, the new cornetist, and to lead the applause—which was creditable to Levy and fortunate for Shuebruk. Mr. Shuebruk is a good cornetist. His *sostenuto* is excellent, and his *pianissimo* perfect. On the *sforzando* he is particularly strong, and as to the soft pedal he is a perfect artist. But he ought to try to do something better with his name. There is a wealth of fancy and ingenuity wasted on that name. He might, we think, try to spell it with more chaste simplicity. If he isn't satisfied with Shubrick, which seems to us a nice name, why doesn't he make a new start and call himself Pepperell?

The old familiar brass-band has gone from the garden; a regiment of fiddles has taken its place and Theodore Thomas stands where erst stood Gilmore—Thomas controlling his orchestra by imperceptible deflections of his right eyelid. His predecessor used to think the duties of a conductor were closely allied to those of a professor of gymnastics. To see Gilmore from a distance, he looked like Wagner, leading a rehearsal of a hurricane chorus. This is the difference between the two leaders of the Garden. Thomas's orchestra can play Wagner. Gilmore's couldn't; but Gilmore himself translated Wagner into visible action, and showed us what his music looked like. We all know what it sounds like. When you hear "Sweet Bye-and-Bye" knocked into a cocked-hat, and played by sixteen oboes and more tubas than the orchestra will hold; you may be sure you are being treated to a "Walkyries' Storm Song" or a "Walhalla chorus" from Wagner's last opera.

The change of leaders seems to be a wise move. We say this for various reasons. The string-band is comparatively inoffensive. It is mild and subdued, and doesn't interrupt conversation. And, with Thomas, those who *do* want to hear what the tune is, can find out by going near enough. Not that Thomas plays tunes. His musical soul revolts at the idea of melody. When he is obliged, by his contract, to play a Strauss waltz, he plays it backwards. He says he has a right to look at things from his own standpoint.

The new leader will need a little judicious bulldozing to get him into the tone of the garden. Mr. Thomas is an admirable musician, an honest and devoted artist, and, no doubt, an excellent man personally. But his ideas of the scope and mission of a beer-garden are extremely limited. He knows very little of what the public wants. The fact is, Mr. Thomas's connection with the public, for some years past, has been confined to occasional issuing of appeals to the American people—appeals which begin by calling them unappreciative dunderheads, and end by asking for \$200,000 for a new Music Hall. The people generally fail to respond, and now Thomas is taking it out of them at the garden by playing airs on all the strings at once, by Bach. The people do not like sixteen-string Bach. They feel that if nothing but the loftiest article in art will do for Mr. Thomas, he ought to hire a small hall and play Beethoven to Louis Engel. It would be well for Mr. Thomas to get rid of a good deal of nonsense about "science" in music, and "educating the masses," and come down to hard-pan and Offenbach.

It looks, however, as if the Garden were about to enter on its most prosperous season yet. It is more pretty decorated, and kept in better order than ever before. The management is in capable hands. Mr. John W. Hamilton has the confidence of the public, and much experience in his business, and he may be expected to make Gilmore's a more thorough success, both from a social and from a business point of view, than it has ever been hitherto.

RHYMES OF THE DAY.

Now the softest of winds wave the flowers
And ruffle the emerald sea,
Now the breeze through the blossoming bowers
Bears the fragrance of chaste Araby,
It floats down each flowerful byway,
Where the sun on the hyacinth lies;
It blows from the sinuous highway
The dust in your eyes.

Now the flowerets banish all sadness,
And bosoms with ecstasy bound,
And all wear the semblance of gladness—
The temperance fiend is around.
The sparrow is playfully hopping
'Mong jessamine beaded with dew,
And the girl with a quarter goes shopping
On Sixth Avenue.

DRAMATIC NOTES.

"A CELEBRATED CASE" will be performed at the Bowery next week.

"DIPLOMACY" is approaching its last nights at Wallack's after a "run" of extreme prosperity.

THOSE who discredited the advent of "Evangeline" this summer will be pleased to hear that it is not coming as engaged.

IF Shakspeare was in town he could see "Richard III." played at the Broadway Theatre. This fact is unquestionably what reconciles him to his present position.

J. K. EMMET, whose prevalence at the Standard Theatre has been the occasion of a number of good houses, continues his specialties in a manner calculated to baffle the critical and make the unthinking gleeful.

FROM the Park Theatre Aimée has departed. The Lingards present this week a bill of novelty attraction, wherein the beautiful Alice Dunning is seen in "Sweethearts;" the vivacious Wm. Horace in farce and sketches, and the rest of the company in subdued support.

THE first act of the "Gascon" at Niblo's Garden is played to show "how a Gascon

lies." It is the simplest thing in the world. Though when we consider that Edward Arnott plays the Gascon it seems probable that about two acts are necessary to prove clearly that he is not a Fenian.

A PROLOGUE entitled "The Miser" is being given at the Fifth Avenue. It bears the name of Chas. Dickens, but lacks "local color," the scene of *Scrooge's* operations being to all appearance somewhere in the 14th ward. The pantomime which succeeds it is novel—as far as a pantomime may be—and diverting and admirably well suited to the summer months.

AIMEE, who seems to be not only ubiquitous but irrepressible, begins a season at Booth's next Monday, where "les Cloches de Corneville," "la Reine Indigo," "la Marjolaine," and "la Timbale d'Argent" will be produced. This is her "farewell" engagement this season; but how many more farewell engagements she will take thereafter we pause to contemplate.

MISS FANNY DAVENPORT goes to the Union Square for a brief midsummer engagement, during which she will appear in Wills' play of "Olivia." It is a dramatization of Goldsmith's "Vicar of Wakefield." Mr. Henry French has secured from him, we believe, the American copyright. Congress will doubtless protect it.

Answers for the Anxious.

TRUMP.—Tramp!

WATSON.—What's on you?

HASELTINE.—She's at it again.

DULCISIMA.—You probably meant to fire your poem at the *Waverley Magazine*, but it hit us. This was unpleasant for us; but, Dulcissima dearest, it was worse for the poem.

VICK J.—Do you know, you are more terrible in a poem than an ordinary man could be with a cornet. You ought to have a permanent engagement to write the librettos to Wagner's operas.

BATHSHEBA.—No, we do not think we shall establish a fashion department just yet. When we are so degraded that we have got down to the fichu and clocked-stocking racket, we will let you know.

FUMAR.—"How can you manage to smoke cigars without making yourself ill?" Build a nice little house for the purpose, and smoke them just as you would hams. This method will certainly obviate the difficulty. It may make the cigar sick; but you are safe.

CANUCK.—Your paragraphs are all right—they are perfect in their way; only they are adjusted to the latitude of Canada. The Canadian idea of humor differs materially from the American. This difference makes the business of exporting jokes from Canada to the United States a peculiarly unprofitable one—from the Canadian point of view.



House where George Washington was born. Enthusiasm of the inhabitants, concealing the house.



J. KEPPLER



PUCK'S COMEDY-STORIES.

V

POSTSCRIPT.

Adapted from the French of E. AUGIER, by H. C. BUNNER.

[CONTINUED.]

MRS. GRIFFITHS.

You are acquainted with the Oakhursts?

CHILLINGWORTH.

I know George Oakhurst.

MRS. GRIFFITHS.

The husband. Well, I know the wife. A charming woman, devoted to her home and her liege lord. It was a love-marriage, you know. Her husband worshipped her. Well, after three years of happy married life, Adelaide Oakhurst had an attack of typhoid-fever. You know the result? She recovered; but—

CHILLINGWORTH.

Her hair had turned white.

MRS. GRIFFITHS.

And now her husband spends his evenings at his club. Well?

CHILLINGWORTH.

Well?

MRS. GRIFFITHS (*rising*).

You excuse him?

CHILLINGWORTH (*laughing*).

To a certain extent. He nursed through a long and dangerous fever a very pretty brunette. She came out of it a different woman entirely. What would Orpheus have thought if, after going through—well, fire and brimstone, Pluto had returned to him a pepper-and-salt Eurydice?

MRS. GRIFFITHS.

Ah, you are all the same—you men! We may be good—intelligent—sincere: we may strive to render ourselves worthy of our future masters—we may try to make ourselves devoted companions—faithful guardians of the honor of the man whom we are to wed—what do *you* care? Poor fools that we are! These things do not appeal to *you*—it is the shade of our hair—the color on our cheeks. We may be coquettes—selfish, frivolous, vain—your love will not diminish one whit. But if we show one gray hair—one wrinkle of care—the frail structure of our happiness crumbles, and our husbands spurn us as—pepper-and-salt Eurydices! And you, whom I was simple enough to pity, just now—

CHILLINGWORTH.

Excuse me. Who is the defendant here—Oakhurst or I?

MRS. GRIFFITHS.

The whole race of men.

CHILLINGWORTH.

The whole race of men—who *will* love a woman's eyes, when she wants them to adore her—intellect?

MRS. GRIFFITHS.

Precisely. We don't want to be loved for our eyes.

CHILLINGWORTH.

My dear Mrs. Griffiths, the same beneficent law of nature which decreed that your eyes shall be beautiful decrees also that I shall admire them. And pray, let me ask you if you imagine that this rule doesn't work both ways?

MRS. GRIFFITHS.

What an outrageous idea!

CHILLINGWORTH.

Come now, on your honor—do you mean to tell me that if you loved a man, and some accident made him a hunchback or a cripple—don't you think that your affection would—well, cool a little?

MRS. GRIFFITHS (*pityingly*).

Oh! how little you know of woman, my poor friend. When we love a man, we love him for

himself, not for his looks. We love his intelligence, his moral qualities, his love for us—we scarcely know whether he is light or dark, young or old. In such a case as that you have put to me, let me tell you that my affection, far from cooling, would but be redoubled. I should seek only to console and cheer him by a redoubled tenderness.

CHILLINGWORTH.

For a week or two.

MRS. GRIFFITHS.

Forever!

CHILLINGWORTH.

Just out of curiosity, I should like to see you in such a position.

MRS. GRIFFITHS.

Oh, I am sure of myself. I only wish I were half as sure of *his* coming bravely through the ordeal.

CHILLINGWORTH.

Who? What ordeal?

MRS. GRIFFITHS.

The man for whom I am waiting—for whom I have family-floured—as you say—my hair. I am going to tell him that I have turned gray during his absence, and that I powder so as not to appear in his eyes a—what was your phrase? A pepper—

CHILLINGWORTH.

A pepper-and-salt Eurydice.

MRS. GRIFFITHS.

And if I see in his eye the slightest, faintest trace of hesitation—all is over!

CHILLINGWORTH.

Then there's some chance for me.

MRS. GRIFFITHS.

Not a bit. If he hesitates, you gain nothing. I shall retire to my family vault in Greenwood.

CHILLINGWORTH.

Haven't you a spare shelf for a friend in your family vault in Greenwood?

MRS. GRIFFITHS.

Don't laugh. When I think of the stake I am playing!

CHILLINGWORTH.

Why do you play it?

MRS. GRIFFITHS.

Because—why did Psyche light the lamp and lose Cupid?

CHILLINGWORTH.

May I come after the lamp is lit, and learn the results of the illumination? Not as a lover—as a friend.

MRS. GRIFFITHS (*extending her hand*).

As a welcome friend.

[*Enter MRS. GRIFFITHS's maid, announcing:*]

Colonel Fairfax is in the parlor, ma'am.

CHILLINGWORTH (*aside*).

Colonel Fairfax!

MRS. GRIFFITHS.

I will be there in a moment. [*The maid departs.*]

CHILLINGWORTH (*coldly*).

If you had told me you were waiting for Colonel Fairfax, I should not have troubled you so long.

MRS. GRIFFITHS.

Why should you not have stayed? Do you know Colonel Fairfax?

CHILLINGWORTH (*taking up his hat*).

Very slightly. I know only that he has held a position under the government in—China, I believe, for two or three years.

MRS. GRIFFITHS.

Well?

CHILLINGWORTH.

And you?

MRS. GRIFFITHS.

I am a widow—since last year only. And so I must have loved Colonel Fairfax during my husband's lifetime? That is what you wish to say?

CHILLINGWORTH (*icily*).

I am detaining you, madam. [*He turns toward the door.*]

MRS. GRIFFITHS.

One word—no! I cannot leave you to believe this! I value your esteem too highly. Mr. Chillingworth, it was I who procured Colonel Fairfax his government appointment, because I felt myself running a danger which it was my duty to avoid.

CHILLINGWORTH (*overcome*).

What an immeasurable ass I am! I deserve neither your love nor your respect. I have offended you beyond pardon.

MRS. GRIFFITHS.

No! You spoke out of love for me and regard for my honor.

CHILLINGWORTH (*turning back*).

And your happiness.

MRS. GRIFFITHS.

I am sure of it.

CHILLINGWORTH.

Then permit me one simple question. Do you know that, shortly after his arrival in China, Colonel Fairfax was reported engaged—

MRS. GRIFFITHS.

To the daughter of a rich English merchant? I do.

CHILLINGWORTH.

If you know it I have nothing more to say.

MRS. GRIFFITHS.

He did not love her.

CHILLINGWORTH.

You are not improving the case.

MRS. GRIFFITHS.

He did not marry her. That alters the affair.

CHILLINGWORTH.

You are indulgent.

MRS. GRIFFITHS.

And you are severe—on a man you do not know.

CHILLINGWORTH.

But I do know him—better than you think. Oh, I'd give something to be your—uncle, just for ten minutes.

MRS. GRIFFITHS.

But you aren't. Good evening, my dear friend! [*She goes out.*]

CHILLINGWORTH (*leaning against the mantel-piece*).

She loves him—blindly! Now I know what's going to happen. At the very first word she says, he'll make a face, and the poor woman will cry out: "It's not true—my hair is as black as it ever was!" That's it! Then what am I waiting for? an invitation to the wedding? (*Seating himself*) What is it fastens me to this place? The chimney may smoke—I'll be hanged if I'll repair it. *He will* probably establish his smoking-room here, confound him. Right over my room, too! I shall hear every creak of his damned impudent boots. And—oh, Lord! six months of that! The whole honeymoon just over my head. I'm going away—to the provinces, to Alaska, or Boston—or somewhere. I'm an unlucky dog. There was only one woman in all the world whom I wanted, and she won't have me. And to think of the fellow she *will* have! He's a—well, I don't know that he's anything very bad—in particular—but then—after all, though, it's only rumor. He may be all right. Come, old fellow, own up! You haven't been square in this matter. Charley Chillingworth, you've been running down that poor devil Fairfax out of pure spite. If he amounted to anything, it wouldn't be so bad; but he's such a miserable little wretch—it isn't fair. Come, this is altogether a bad business.

[*Re-enter MRS. GRIFFITHS.*]

CHILLINGWORTH (*aside*).
She looks rather pensive. (*he coughs gently*).
MRS. GRIFFITHS (*seating herself*).
Oh, it is you?

CHILLINGWORTH.
Are you back already? Did you find the slightest, faintest shade of—

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
Not at all! He was—perfect. He even pretended to think that white hair becomes me.

CHILLINGWORTH.
After that, I suppose, he took his departure?

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
No. I sent him away. I wanted to be left to myself—no, that's not meant for you. I'm very glad to find you here.

CHILLINGWORTH.
Well, I'm hanged if I know what I'm doing here.

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
Please don't go. He's coming back, to take tea with me.

CHILLINGWORTH.
And I am to be present to make your triumph complete?

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
My triumph? Yes, I ought to be wildly exultant; but somehow I'm not.

CHILLINGWORTH.
Overwhelmed with joy, I suppose?

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
No. It's your fault.

CHILLINGWORTH.
Mine?

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
Yes. What you said about Colonel Fairfax is troubling me.

CHILLINGWORTH.
It's troubling you no more than me. When you entered, I was just subjecting my conscience to a cross-examination, and it was coming out very badly, I assure you.

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
Ah! that's better. Come, tell me how you look at the matter now. Sit down again. I think too much of you—

CHILLINGWORTH.
To think much of a man of whom I didn't think much? Thank you. Well, I confess I spoke far too hastily.

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
Ah, indeed! And so this China flirtation—

CHILLINGWORTH.
Oh, of course you were right. He didn't love her.

MRS. GRIFFITHS (*quickly*).
Oh, well, as you said yourself, that's nothing in his favor. Would you have engaged yourself to a girl, under such circumstances?

CHILLINGWORTH (*taken aback*).
I? Oh—well, of course—that's quite a different thing. I mean—that is—oh, yes, of course I would. Undoubtedly! Certainly! Of course—of course. (*Aside*) Damned if I would!

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
So soon? In three or four months?

CHILLINGWORTH.
The time didn't matter.

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
Pardon me. Either Colonel Fairfax forgot me very soon, or he was about to marry a woman for some other motive than an honest affection.

CHILLINGWORTH.
But he didn't marry her.

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
That's what I said.

CHILLINGWORTH.
Of course—certainly. And I say, too—

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
When I said it, you told me I was too indul-

gent. Will you be so kind as to tell me if you have an opinion of your own, Mr. Chillingworth?

CHILLINGWORTH.
If I had, what do you want of it? What can I tell you? Isn't your mind made up? You have put your friend to the test—he has come out of it satisfactorily—

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
Too satisfactorily. Isn't it a little surprising—(*rising and approaching the mirror*)—this complete indifference to my—what shall I say?

CHILLINGWORTH.
Your beauty.

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
Well, my hair. If I have a strong point, it is my hair. One would think he had never noticed it.

CHILLINGWORTH (*with a significant smile*).
He loves your intellect.

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
Don't joke about it. Suppose he doesn't love me—what a horrible inference I must draw!

CHILLINGWORTH.
What!

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
Did I not tell you that he had no fortune?

CHILLINGWORTH.
Now it is you who are too severe.

MRS. GRIFFITHS (*dropping into a chair*).
Oh, dear! I don't know what to think. Advise me!

CHILLINGWORTH.
I advise you to marry me.

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
I didn't ask you for that kind of advice.

CHILLINGWORTH.
It's the best variety I have.

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
Do you really, on your honor, think he loves me?

CHILLINGWORTH.
I love you too much myself to doubt it.

MRS. GRIFFITHS (*rising impatiently*).
Very well! So much the worse for him. For I won't marry him.

CHILLINGWORTH.
Won't you?

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
No. Sorry to disappoint you, but—

CHILLINGWORTH.
Oh, don't mind my feelings!

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
But pray don't think that because I reject him, I have no choice left but you.

CHILLINGWORTH.
Of course not. But I shall hope to wear the others out in time. By the way, if I am not a factor in this new move, what has Fairfax done to offend you?

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
I have told you all.

CHILLINGWORTH.
All? Do you mean to say there's no—no Postscript? A woman always has a Postscript. Come now, confess, what is the Postscript?

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
There is none—not the shade of one! But, now, what am I to do to dismiss him? I won't ask you, for you are absolutely good for nothing to-day.

CHILLINGWORTH.
A woman has always the right to take back her word.

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
Her word? Oh, I've never given him my word.

CHILLINGWORTH.
Not even just now?

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
No, I don't know why I didn't; but some instinct told me not to commit myself.

CHILLINGWORTH.
Then there's nothing more easy. (*Rising*) He is coming to take tea this evening.

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
But I don't want to have him come—now. I shall expect you to drink that tea.

CHILLINGWORTH (*aside*).
Fairfax's tea! This is getting on. (*Aloud*) Well, you'd better write him.

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
No—not that. I've written to him—too much—already.

CHILLINGWORTH.
He has letters of yours?

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
Only one or two—not very compromising—you might read them yourself. A widow's letters. But still, letters—

CHILLINGWORTH.
Send him back his, and he'll return you yours.

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
And suppose he doesn't.

CHILLINGWORTH.
Haven't you some friend who would take charge of the affair? I think, with a little diplomacy—

MRS. GRIFFITHS (*laughing*).
What is your idea of diplomacy, Mr. Chillingworth?

CHILLINGWORTH (*languidly*).
Well, something like this: (*with sudden vigor and emphasis*) "Colonel Fairfax, these are your letters to Mrs. Griffiths. I am here to obtain hers in return."

MRS. GRIFFITHS (*more seriously*).
I must admit, that diplomatic eye, and that diplomatic fist on the table might have some effect. (*unlocking the table drawer*). Here is his share of the correspondence.

CHILLINGWORTH.
Where does he live?

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
He left me his card—where is it? (*Feeling in her pocket*.) Where did I put it? Perhaps I forgot to take it from him—ah, no, here it is.

CHILLINGWORTH.
(*Taking it, and laying it on the table.*) Well?

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
Well? Are you not going?

CHILLINGWORTH.
Do you wish me to go?

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
Do you not understand me? This is a service that I can ask of none except a most devoted friend. It is a request which I make of you as my nearest friend—as my brother.

CHILLINGWORTH (*calmly*).
I refuse.

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
What!

CHILLINGWORTH.
I refuse. As a brother, I am a distinct and unqualified failure. I am a brute—a barbarian. Besides, I am not your brother. I am your adorer. In that capacity, I am at your service now and forever. If I go on this mission, and I will go, it must be not as a brother, but as a man who has the right to try, in the future, to win your hand. Is it agreed?

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
No!

CHILLINGWORTH.
No?

MRS. GRIFFITHS (*giving him her hand*).
No! You go—as—my—my future protector!

CHILLINGWORTH (*kissing her hand*).
And slave!

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
But stay—one minute. Here is something that I had forgotten—this locket. Give it back to him.

CHILLINGWORTH.
His portrait.

MRS. GRIFFITHS.
No—a lock of his hair that he had the kindness to send me from China. He won't be sorry to have it back again.

CHILLINGWORTH.
Why? Hasn't he any more?

MRS. GRIFFITHS (*with a sudden outburst*).
He's bald as a billiard-ball!

CHILLINGWORTH (*turning to the door*).
THE POSTSCRIPT!

CURTAIN.

An Automatic Enigma.

JULIAN HAWTHORNE IN "BELGRAVIA."

IV.

EVENING had come. An expectant crowd at the railway station had witnessed the arrival of the train containing the famous Dutch Automaton. The train came in with a long-drawn shriek, as of a soul in despair; and after its wondrous freight had been disembarked, it rattled away again with an infernal cachinnation as though some unholy joke were in the wind. Meanwhile, under direction of the manager (a remarkable personage, with long black hair falling over his shoulders, and a copious black beard), a large box or case, resembling in appearance a cross between a coffin and a meat-safe, was carefully lifted into the express-wagon. The on-lookers whispered to one another that it held the wondrous mechanism of the Automaton. The sensation created was profound, and not unmingled with fear. Men gathered in little groups as if for mutual protection, whispering apprehensively to one another, and casting strange glances over their shoulders into those dark recesses of the station which were unilluminated by the lurid gleam of the lanterns. But when the rattle of the express-wagon had died away in the distance, a fresher air seemed to blow around; the whispers became voices, and at last some of the bolder spirits went so far as to laugh and crack jokes—almost scaring themselves again by their own audacity.

Eight o'clock. Every seat was filled; all the standing room was jammed to suffocation; the staircase and the outside flight of steps were packed; the scaffolding which the enterprise of Mr. Cooper had caused to be erected groaned beneath the swarms of human beings, at a dollar a head, which clustered over it. Every tree which grew within a hundred yards of the hall had been hired by speculators, who charged half a dollar for the upper branches, a quarter of a dollar for the lower ones, and ten cents for a cling to the trunk; and every one of those speculators made a fortune. In short, no such "house" had ever been seen or heard of either in Mullenville or elsewhere; and if the manager of the Automaton received, as it was affirmed he did, ten per cent. on the proceeds, it was enough to have paid poor Mr. Swansdowne's debts to Mr. Cooper five times over.

Within the hall, a black curtain was stretched across the stage, which was raised about five feet above the level of the floor. In front of this curtain, by way of orchestra, sat David Clank, the village jail-keeper, with his violin under his chin. In a private stall, nearly opposite him, was Asa Cooper, with Nellie Swansdowne beside him; the former loquacious,

smiling, and pomaded; the latter pale, silent, and nervous.

A bell sounded. The manager stepped before the curtain and made a dignified obeisance to the assembly. He stroked his beard, passed his fingers through his long hair, and said that this was the proudest moment of his life. He affirmed that this was the first American audience before which the Automaton had been exhibited; and he would even go so far as to say that the eminent professor in the University of Utrecht in Holland had manufactured it specially with an eye to its appearance here to-night. He would venture to add that the expectations aroused by the placards would be more than satisfied. The Automaton was certain to outdo itself in the presence of so much worth and wisdom, so much youth and beauty, as were gathered together in that hall—and outside of it. At the words "youth and beauty" his eye fell upon the upturned and bewildered face of Nellie Swansdowne. He smiled, bowed again, stroked his beard, and vanished.

An interval elapsed, and then the bell sounded once more. David Clank laid down his violin, walked to the corner of the stage, and pulled a string. The curtain flew back and revealed a large box, standing on end, in shape something between a coffin and a meat-safe. Amidst a death-like stillness a narrow door in the front of this box opened, and out stepped, with an air of jaunty assurance, with light flaxen hair and whiskers, with a suit of clothes in the latest fashion, with an eye-glass, a switch-cane, and patent-leather boots—out stepped, with a bow and a smirk, just as any human being might have done, only with infinitely more grace and ease—out stepped the miraculous, the mysterious, the supernatural, the incomparable Automaton! And the whole vast audience in the hall, as well as the innumerable multitude without, having held their breath uninterruptedly for a week, now let it out in one prolonged, simultaneous, and mighty "Ah-h-h-h-h!" Their suspense was at an end, and the greatest wonder of the world was before their eyes.

It was all true; nay, not half the truth had been said about it. That Dutch Automaton, as Asa observed, *sotto voce*, to Nellie, did beat all nature. It seemed absolutely endowed with human intelligence; indeed, the opinion was generally held that no merely human intelligence could compete with it. Why, it ogled the women! it cracked jokes with the men! it danced a hornpipe! it whistled "Yankee Doodle"! The audience became excited—wild—frantic! Their frenzy rose to madness, yet seemed utterly inadequate to the magnitude of the occasion. The Dutch Automaton was not an automaton at all—it was a demigod! Hurrah! Huzza! Hi!

And how did the demigod impress Nellie Swansdowne? When first the door of the box opened, and that marvelous piece of mechanism stepped forth and walked down to the footlights, she gave a little shriek, and half started from her seat. Recovering herself, with a nervous laugh, she looked around to see whether anyone had observed her. Fortunately, everyone was intent upon the stage. She turned her eyes again towards the Automaton, and as she looked her gaze became more absorbed, until she seemed to live only in the eyes. The expression of wonder on her lovely face deepened into amazement, which merged into incredulity, which gave way to mystification, which intensified into fear. Her sweet lips parted, her breath came in fits and starts. During all the time the Automaton was in sight she uttered not a single word. Unquestionably, no person in the audience was more affected by that evening's entertainment than was Nellie Swansdowne.

At length the end came. The Automaton, in a few well-chosen words, took leave of the audience, at the same time expressing the hope of meeting them soon again—if not all, at least some of them. It was said afterwards that a peculiar twinkle was observable in its left eye as it made this addition. The machine then retired up the stage, keeping its face towards the spectators, and bowing to the right and the left. On reaching the door of its box, it paused, took a nosegay from its button-hole, and tossed it over the footlights. A hundred hands were outstretched to grasp it, but it fell right into Nellie Swansdowne's lap. She caught it up, and several pairs of jealous feminine eyes in the vicinity saw—or fancied they saw—her detach from it a fold of white paper, which she slipped into her bosom. The Automaton nodded and smiled at her, then vanished into its box, the curtain was drawn into place again, and the exhibition was over.

The audience, exhausted by its emotions, remained seated for several moments, trying to realize the fact that this wonder had actually been present before their eyes. But when the attendants began to turn out the lights, the people rose, whispering and murmuring among themselves, and began crowding out of the hall. And now a kind of awe fell upon them all—a reluctance to look over their shoulders—an unreasoning impulse to get out to the open air as quickly as possible. They looked askance at one another, as though under an apprehension lest that supernatural piece of Dutch clockwork might suddenly appear at their elbows. The multitude outside, who had pressed to the entrance, curious to see the faces of those who had been under the same roof with the Automaton, shrank back alarmed at sight of their pale and panic-stricken appearance. One and all hurried homewards as fast as their legs could carry them, and in an incredibly short space of time not a soul was left in the streets.

V.

AMONG the last to leave the hall were Asa Cooper and Nellie Swansdowne. A melancholy interest attaches to this final appearance of theirs together in the world. They were seen to walk away in the direction of Nellie's home; but when they had passed beyond the light of the gas-lamps which burned dimly over the iron gate of the wall, darkness swallowed them up, and there were none to tell what happened to them afterwards. It was a warm, cloudy night, and heavy drops of rain fell intermittently: the air was close and oppressive, and distant echoes of thunder moaned in the air. Nellie Swansdowne, the pretty, the sweet, the lovable, was never seen at Mullenville again.

Asa Cooper was picked up the next day on the high road to Boston, several miles away. He was in a condition of utter physical exhaustion; his clothes were covered with dirt, and his right eye was still a terribly swollen and discolored. But worse than all, his mind was found to have fallen into a state of hopeless imbecility. When questioned as to what had occurred to him after leaving the hall, he could only mander about a phantom carriage, drawn by black horses, which had come thundering along the road after Nellie and himself, while they were still a quarter of a mile or more from the former's home. Out of this carriage, he affirmed, had sprung a goblin which, from its figure, height, and bearing, he had no difficulty in identifying with the famous Dutch Automaton, although the flaxen hair and whiskers had been cut off. The goblin had taken advantage of his temporary consternation to prostrate him by a left-hander on the eye; it had then seized Nellie (who, either from terror

or from some other cause, had been unable to utter so much as a single scream) round the waist, and had leaped with her into the phantom coach, which had immediately disappeared into the night with a rumble like an earthquake. Asa, on recovering his feet, had set off in pursuit; but after running a long distance he had dropped from fatigue, and had lain where he fell until the next day. Such was his story, as nearly as it could be pieced together from his incoherent mutterings and ravings. The good people of Mullenville, with that clear common sense which has always characterized them, paid no further heed to the unfortunate imbecile's disclosures than to make them a warrant for his immediate committal to the town asylum for persons of unsound mind. Thither was he accordingly conveyed; but his infirmity turning out to be harmless, he was ultimately allowed to return to the bosom of his family. There he may still be found; and, to do him justice, he seems no more idiotic than he always was, save on the one subject of the night of September 22, 1873.

Not the least peculiar feature of this mysterious affair is the fact that, from that day to this, no one either heard of or saw the famous Dutch Automaton. The only trace left of it was the large box, which remained standing on the stage behind the black curtain. A committee, of which Mr. Cooper was chairman, was organized to sit upon this box; which, not without many misgivings, they did: and arrived at the conclusion that it ought to be opened. David Clank, as being the man in Mullenville who seemed to stand least in awe of it, was appointed to this momentous duty; the committee standing by, armed with a double-burreled shot-gun and a hymn-book. The box was found to contain nothing more terrible than a couple of wigs, with beards to match; one being jet-black, the other of a light flaxen tint. These relics were locked up in the Court House; and then the committee, having voted that their proceedings should be printed and that their chairman should be thanked, adjourned *sine die*.

In process of time, as people's imaginations cooled, the fame of the Automaton would seem to have fallen somewhat into disrepute. It was declared that the thing was not so very wonderful after all; that it had not, as a matter of fact, done half the feats it had been credited with; that its motions had been limited in scope and stiff and mechanical in character; that a whizzing sound, as of a clock running down, had attended every movement; that its voice had been nothing better than a croak and a squeak; that it had never sung or whistled at all; and that, as to reading or writing—humbly!

Such are the deliberate conclusions of the more intellectual part of the community. But some foolish and pig-headed persons there are who persist in believing that there was more (or less) about that Automaton than the public ever suspected. They ask why David Clank wore so knowing an air at and after the date of the exhibition? They inquire who gave him that new violin? and what he meant by his facetious remarks about the Automaton's connection with Holland? They furthermore express curiosity as to who paid Mr. Swansdowne's debts? and would like to be informed why the latter took the disappearance of his beloved and only daughter so composedly? They even insinuate that the fold of paper which Nellie was seen to detach from the bouquet contained writing, the purport whereof was to remind her of a certain rash wish she had once uttered, and to prepare her for that wish's strange fulfillment. Moreover . . . but no! let this suffice. Why concern ourselves with the pointless ineptitudes of visionaries?

I regret my inability to make this tale com-

plete by reference to the fate of one who figured prominently in the earlier part of it—Ned Holland. Did he live to repent of that foolish fit of temper which separated him from a girl he truly loved and who loved him? Did he, when it was too late, seek forgiveness and reconciliation, and did he register a vow to live unmarried for her sake? These are questions which I can afford the reader no help in answering. But Ned was a fellow of such resolution, such loyalty, and such good sense, that it seems improbable he would tamely submit to the loss of all he most prized, still less that he would seek consolation in forgetfulness. Nevertheless, men are men, and I should not wonder if Ned Holland were a married man. But even were he to turn up the happy possessor of a loving wife and three lovely children, I should refuse to believe that his heart had ever wavered in its constancy to her who was once Nellie Swansdowne.



Puck's Arranges.

PAUL BREMOND is called the father of railroads in Texas. His family ties must be numerous.—*Picayune*.

ST. LOUIS has had its cyclone, and now it's Chicago's turn to have a tidal wave from the Lake.—*Boston Post*.

THE Texas camel can travel 100 miles a day, if pressed. The trouble is that nobody cares to press him.—*Boston Post*.

WHEN each and every person in our land owns a bank, a railroad, four stores and a span of Congressmen, times will begin to look up.—*N. Y. Graphic*.

WOMAN tempted man to eat; but he took to drink himself.—*Yonkers Statesman*. But he first got drunk beside her. (Ahem! "By-cider.")—*Phila. Bulletin*.

IN Alaska, they say a fish grows which is so fat that the inhabitants touch a match to its tail and burn the whole fish up for a candle. We should think that would spoil the fish.—*Norristown Herald*.

MISS KELLOGG says newspaper men are just like lemons—fit only to be squeezed as much as possible, then tossed aside. You just keep your distance, Clara Kellogg. Police—Police!—*Buffalo Express*.

THE fact that a New Jersey clergyman is on trial for poisoning his wife has set many persons hunting the Bible to see if wife poisoning is one of the precepts of the Christian religion.—*Kronikle-Herald*.

THE *American Builder* publishes a valuable article on how to act in case of fire. The customary thing is to sue an insurance company, in an effort to get the amount of your loss.—*Syracuse Sunday Times*.

THE artist who has been laying up for the winter, can now be seen along the railroads throwing fantasy and passion into the poetic legends which speak the marvelous virtues of corn and bunion liniments.—*Oats*.

PHILADELPHIA was going to have a line of steamers to Brazil, but the affair proved a failure. Let us not, however, be too severe. Perhaps the Russian Government killed the line by buying up all the steamers for it.—*Phila. Kronikle-Herald*.

OTHELLO'S APOLOGY.

(*Oil City Derrick*.)

Most potent, grave and reverend seignors,
That I have ta'en away this old man's daughter
Is most true; true, I have married her,
As I can prove by the officiating clergyman
Who is a justice of the peace down in Herkimer.
Her father loved me; not a continental
Did I care for the old man's love,
But I pretended to reciprocate his affection.
And in this way did I make myself
A very Muldoon with him in solidity.
He oft invited me to tell the story of my life,
From year to year, the battles, sieges, fortunes,
Etcætera and so forth and so on,
With which I had been stuffing him.
I ran it through e'en from my boyish days,
And you can bet your sweet lives
That I spread it on pretty thick;
I spoke of most disastrous chances,
But did not stop to say they were with
A confounded constable who wanted me
For the small offense of jumping a board bill;
Of moving accidents by flood and field;
Of hairbreadth 'scapes in the imminent deadly
breach,

Or some other place that I had read of;
Of being taken by the insolent foe
And sold to slavery; of my redemption thence,
And with it all my travel's history,
Omitting that part when I was introducing
The North American Corn and Bunion Eradi-

cator,
Warranted to remove corns and bunions
Without pain or loss of blood.

All these did the old gent swallow,
And to hear which would Desdemona seriously
incline;

But still the house affairs would draw her
thence.

Although in this I now suspect my Desdemona
Did dissemble, for since we married are
I find she can no more a flap-jack bake
Than I can cope with Hercules!
One day the gentle maid with earnest heart
requested

That I would all my pilgrimage dilate
Whereof parcels she had something heard,
But not distinctly.
This was great leather, and all at once
I did consent.

My story was immense,
And it took me four nights a week
For three years, to tell it.
When at length the tale was done,
She gave me for my pains a world of sighs.
She swore in faith 'twas strange, 'twas passing
strange;

'Twas pitiful; 'twas wondrous pitiful,
And laid over anything she had ever heard
before

By a large majority.
She wished she had not heard it; yet she wished
That heaven had made her such a man.
She thanked me,
And bade me, if I had a friend that loved her
I should but teach him how to tell my story,
And that would woo her.

This was a complete give-away;
That is to say, tumble did I to the racket,
And we were wed forthwith.
So there's the long and short of it.

THINGS have got to such a pass in New York
that a drum-major can't appear on the street
without being mistaken for a Russian officer,
and asked by some reporter if it is true that
he has bought the Inman fleet of steamers.—
Rewey.

ALTHOUGH the young men of to-day are not
exactly what they ought to be, we don't con-
sider it right that they should all be put down
for ministers.—*Wild Oats*.

GRANT writes from Paris that when he returns home it will not be to accept office, but to retire to private life. This will do much to dispel the idea that Grant is a cruel son of Mars who cares nothing for public sentiment.—*Derrick.*

THE *Detroit Free Press* lost exactly \$44,242.61 through its fire.—*Ex.* The *Free Press* has our sympathy, and we hereby pledge ourselves to be one of four to wipe out these figures. We'll make up the last two figures, if three other persons can be found liberal enough to wrestle with the five remaining ones. There is nothing mean about us.—*Norr. Herald.*

IN a breach of promise action in Scotland, about forty letters from the defendant to the fair plaintiff were read. Each letter contained from thirty to one hundred crosses, which represented kisses. One letter, embellished with a string of thirty-seven crosses, contained this explanatory remark: "The kisses is not so good upon paper as they are naked."—*Unknown Ex.*

DETROIT was visited the other day by a committee of three citizens who had been appointed by the residents of an inland town to come here, examine a fire steamer and return and report on the advisability of purchasing one for home protection. Two of the committee were greatly pleased with their inspection, but the chairman hung off. He argued that the machines were too heavy, burned too much fuel, had too much machinery to be understood, and wound up by saying that they did not throw enough water.

"Why, this machine throws four hundred gallons of water per minute," remarked one of the firemen.

"Yaas, but s'posed there's five hundred gallons of fire per minute?" bluntly argued the chairman.

He was inspecting a lot of blue-painted water-pails when last seen.—*Detroit Free Press.*



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He was playing with a specimen of granite,
Cogitating of the quantity of joy
It would give him for to spin it—so he span it.

There were divers coruscations of the water,
With a sort of erysip'las on the trousers,
And an urchin skipping for another quarter—
And the cusses—oh! the cusses! they were rousers.
—*Yonkers Gazette.*

TWENTY-NINE "Generals," thirty-four "Kernels," forty-eight "Jedges," a battalion of "Majahs" and a regiment of "Captins" have announced themselves as candidates for Governor in Arkansas. It is to be hoped that the Sergeants, Corporals and privates will get a show in the Convention, but they don't seem to have much show in the newspapers.—*Philadelphia Times.*

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